

Application No. 09/707,926

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-8 (Canceled).

9. (Previously Presented) A method for processing a print job with geographically distributed print shops, comprising:

coupling a first set of print shops, a second set print shops, and a central repository via a network; the first set of print shops having one print shop and the second set of print shops having a plurality of print shops;

sending to the central repository a production schedule representative of at least one print shop in the second set of print shops with access controls that allow visibility of its production schedule to include the print shop in the first set of print shops; each production schedule sent by a print shop comprising data allowing a representation of the respective production schedule;

retrieving, at the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository via the network when the print shop in the first set of print shops lacks sufficient printing capacity for processing the print job, the production schedules of print shops in the second set of print shops having access controls that permit visibility of their production schedules to the print shop in the first set of print shops; and

transferring, from the print shop in the first set of print shops to at least one print shop in the second set of print shops via the network, at least part of the print job when spare printing capacity is indicated in at least one retrieved production schedule of the second set of print shops;

wherein the print shop in the first set of print shops and the at least one print shop in the second set of print shops effect the transfer of the at least part of the print job independent of any centralized scheduling application while each print shop may operate a scheduling application of its choosing.

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10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein the print shop in the first set of print shops displays the production schedules of the second set of print shops retrieved from the central repository.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein each of the print shops in the second set of print shops sends its respective production schedule to the central repository.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the network is a computer network.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein at least some of the production schedules of the print shops in the second set of print shops are created from a digitized photograph of a hard copy rendering of their production schedules.

14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising limiting the production schedules of the print shops in the second set of print shops retrieved by the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository as a function of geographical location of the print shop in the first set of print shops and the print shops in the second set of print shops.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising limiting the production schedules of print shops in the second set of print shops retrieved by the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository as a function of a user profile attached to the print shop in the first set of print shops.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein the user profile of the print-shop in the first set of print shops defines a set of preferred print shops from the second set of print shops.

Claims 17-20. (Canceled).